



Upper Hunter Shire Council

REQUEST TO ADDRESS COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Summary of guidelines for public participants

- The council allows public participation at each ordinary meeting of the council for the purpose of hearing oral submissions from members of the public on items of business to be considered at the meeting. Public participation may also be held at extraordinary council meetings and meetings of standing committees of the council.
- Council allows a maximum of 5 minutes per speaker.
- Speakers during public participation cannot ask questions of the council, councillors or council staff.
- Meetings are conducted in accordance with Council’s adopted Code of Meeting Practice.

Select Meeting to be Addressed

- Council** Completed and signed forms must be submitted no later than 12.00pm on the day of the Council meeting. **Meeting date:**
- Other** Please indicate Committee name.....
Completed and signed forms must be submitted no later than 12.00pm the day prior to the Committee meeting.

Name: Telephone:

Address:

Email:

Representing: (self / name of organisation / other party)

Agenda item no & description or topic:

.....

.....

For or against the recommendation as printed in the agenda: **FOR** **AGAINST**.
(If you agree with the Report recommendation you are ‘FOR’ – If you don’t, you are ‘AGAINST’)

In signing this request I acknowledge and agree to abide by Council’s Code of Meeting Practice, and recognise that I am speaking in a public setting and that my address to Council will be recorded and made publically available on Council’s website.

Signature of speaker:
(Forms must be signed to be accepted as valid)

Office Use Only:

Signature of Staff: Date: Time:



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES

Extracted from Part 4 of the Upper Hunter Shire Council Code of Meeting Practice

4. Public participation

- 4.1. The council allows public participation at each ordinary meeting of the council for the purpose of hearing oral submissions from members of the public on items of business to be considered at the meeting. Public participation may also be held at extraordinary council meetings and meetings of standing committees of the council.
- 4.2. Public participation is to be chaired by the mayor or their nominee.
- 4.3. To speak at a meeting, a person must first make an application to the council in the approved form. Applications to speak must be received by 12 noon on the date on which the meeting is to be held, and must identify the item of business on the agenda of the council meeting the person wishes to speak on, and whether they wish to speak 'for' or 'against' the item.
- 4.4. A person may apply to speak on no more than three items of business on the agenda of the council meeting.
- 4.5. Legal representatives acting on behalf of others are not to be permitted to speak during public participation unless they identify their status as a legal representative when applying to speak at the meeting.
- 4.6. The general manager or their delegate may refuse an application to speak at a council meeting. The general manager or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.
- 4.7. No more than three speakers are to be permitted to speak 'for' or 'against' each item of business on the agenda for the council meeting.
- 4.8. If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the general manager or their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to address the council on the item of business. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to address the council, the general manager or their delegate is to determine who will address the council.
- 4.9. If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the general manager or their delegate may, in consultation with the mayor or the mayor's nominated chairperson, increase the number of speakers permitted to speak on an item of business, where they are satisfied that it is necessary to do so to allow the council to hear a fuller range of views on the relevant item of business.
- 4.10. Approved speakers are to register, along with their application to speak, any written, visual or audio material to be presented in support of their address to the council at, and to identify any equipment needs by 12 noon on the day of the meeting. The general manager or their delegate may refuse to allow such material to be presented.
- 4.11. The general manager or their delegate is to determine the order of speakers for public participation.
- 4.12. Each speaker will be allowed five minutes to address the council. This time is to be strictly enforced by the chairperson.
- 4.13. Speakers during public participation must not digress from the item on the agenda of the council meeting they have applied to address the council on. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.
- 4.14. A councillor (including the chairperson) may, through the chairperson, ask questions of a speaker following their address to the council. Questions put to a speaker must be direct, succinct and without argument.



- 4.15. Speakers are under no obligation to answer a question put under clause 4.14. Answers by the speaker, to each question are to be limited to three minutes.
- 4.16. Speakers during public participation cannot ask questions of the council, councillors or council staff.
- 4.17. The general manager or their nominee may, with the concurrence of the chairperson, address the council in response to an address to the council during public participation after the address and any subsequent questions and answers have been finalised.
- 4.18. When addressing the council, speakers during public participation must comply with this code and all other relevant council codes, policies and procedures. Speakers must refrain from engaging in disorderly conduct, publicly alleging breaches of the council's code of conduct or making other potentially defamatory statements.
- 4.19. If the chairperson considers that a speaker during public participation has engaged in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.18, the chairperson may request the person to refrain from the inappropriate behaviour and to withdraw and unreservedly apologise for any inappropriate comments. Where the speaker fails to comply with the chairperson's request, the chairperson may immediately require the person to stop speaking.
- 4.20. Clause 4.19 does not limit the ability of the chairperson to deal with disorderly conduct by speakers during public participation in accordance with the provisions of Part 15 of this code.
- 4.21. Where a speaker engages in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.18, the general manager or their delegate may refuse further applications from that person to speak at council and committee meetings for such a period as the general manager or their delegate considers appropriate.